

CONFIDENTIALIC 75-4525
18 December 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy to the DCI for the Intelligence Community

SUBJECT: RONI's Future

1. It is probably time to consider a revival of the long-dormant RONI. We would, in fact, like to produce issue No. 3 in March 1976; if we do so, plans should be developed now and actual work begin in January. Thus, this memo.

2. RONI was blessed by USIB in July, partly as a consequence of a general appreciation of the need for some means to evaluate the quality of national intelligence, and partly as a result of a general (though not unanimous) feeling that RONI was at least a step in the right direction. And presumably, had the House Select Committee on Intelligence not intervened, issues No. 3 and 4 would now be a part of history. By March, God willing, apprehensions related to HSC exposures will have diminished, and our audience, both within and without the Community, will be ready for another round.

3. The question addressed here is, what should the next RONI look like; i. e., what changes should we make in its form, content, and objectives? Clearly, some changes should be made:

- Attitudes within the Community are changing, adjusting to new pressures and opportunities, and RONI should reflect and help shape movement in new directions;
- The structure and the leadership of the Community are also changing, and RONI will have to respond to new circumstances;
- Outside interest in the Community's performance, and in evaluating that performance, is growing, and RONI should reflect (and capitalize on) this particular development;

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

- Our own perceptions--informed by experience and by reactions to the first two issues--are changing, and RONI should display our increasing awareness of what this medium can and should do for the DCI.

4. We envision, in general, a RONI that would be more responsive to the DCI's interests, broader in scope, open to more contributors, and slanted more toward the concerns of Community consumers. It would be less particular in approach, placing less emphasis on current intelligence, statistical breakdowns, and individual regional and topical commentaries.

5. Specifically, we would begin RONI with a Section devoted in the main to a presentation of the DCI's views concerning substantive and managerial issues of his choosing. Two of the major items in half the first section of the June issue were drafted at the DCI's request; we would simply hope to expand the proportion of DCI items here, and encourage him to see in RONI a way to express his interests and concerns in writing to a widespread (but elite!) audience.

6. Section II, which in the past treated all areas and topics and provided statistical summaries (in bar charts), would offer individual assessments of important papers (e.g., major NIEs) or explore significant substantive issues (e.g., the Community's disagreement and disarray vis-a-vis China). It might in addition present the views of consumers concerning papers and issues, perhaps as revealed via the NSCIC Working Group.* And it might also provide papers (perhaps prepared by CPAD or MPRRD) concerning the collection, processing, and funding of intelligence.

7. The next section would, as now, consist of special articles and studies of presumed interest to the Community at large. These could be contributed by the NIOs (and might reflect their KIQ evaluation

* RONI could offer consumers a quick, convenient, and effective way to communicate with the Community--to offer suggestions, express misgivings, or even, occasionally, serve up praise. Excerpts from minutes of the NSCIC Working Group, interviews with or letters from individual consumers, surveys of consumer opinions, etc., all could be used to good effect.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

reports), or DIOs, or officers in the DDI/CIA, or whatever. We would, of course, also hope to continue to publish worthwhile letters from readers.

8. All in all, the new book would be less "picky," more concerned with problems of broad scope, more of an IC Staff (vice PRD) publication. It would not discourage candor, nor would it shun controversy. But its overall tone would be, by design, more clearly constructive than in the past. RONI, in short, could serve consumer and DCI alike and become a strong and positive force in the Community at large.

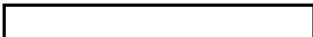


25X1

Chief, Product Review Division

Distribution:

O - Adrse
1 - IC/Registry
1 - AD/DCI/IC
1 - PRD Chron
1 - PRD /RONI
1 - RWS



25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

Next 5 Page(s) In Document Exempt

~~SECRET~~

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

IC 75-2550

Intelligence Community Staff

The Honorable Robert F. Ellsworth
Assistant Secretary of Defense
International Security Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20301

Dear Ambassador Ellsworth:

I very much appreciate your letter of 7 October concerning the last issue of the Review of National Intelligence (RONI) and your suggestions for improvements in future issues. We are currently reappraising the form, content, and purpose of the RONI, and your comments are timely and pertinent in all three respects.

We believe, as you do, that RONI should pay greater attention to in-depth intelligence analysis (and relatively less to current intelligence), and our next issue will do so. In this context, it occurs to me that the briefing on the Arab-Israeli military balance to be provided by the NIO/ME at the next meeting of the NSCIC Working Group might lead to a discussion which could form the basis for an article on Middle East problems in RONI.

I note your continuing attention to the form and content of NIE 11-14. I believe that a concise summary of senior consumers' reactions to the published version of that Estimate might be a good way for RONI to discuss the strong and weak points of that Estimate. Possibly a similar piece on NIE 11-3/8, after it is published, might be useful as well; I believe that that document reflects considerable improvement in the Community's efforts to state uncertainties.

We agree that an analysis--or several analyses--of intelligence coverage of Indochina ought to be done. The June RONI, having noted the problem and suggested some preliminary conclusions, specifically allowed for just such an effort. But I would like to ponder for a little longer just when, how, and to what practical end such a study (or studies) should be undertaken.

~~SECRET~~

25X1

Finally, I should mention that we heartily concur with your notion that RONI might serve as an "ideal place to communicate what the consumer feels about the Community's performance." We have hoped all along that, inter alia, RONI might ultimately serve this function.

Warm regards.

Sincerely,



Samuel V. Wilson
Lieutenant General, USA
Deputy to the DCI for the
Intelligence Community

25X1